

**Hearing 2/27 at 1:00 p.m.  
Senate Finance Committee**

**Health, Health Insurance, and Health Occupations - Perinatal Mental Health Conditions  
(SB 891)**

**Position: Favorable**

Chair Beidle and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Emily Smoot, and I write this letter in strong **support** of SB 891, Health, Health Insurance, and Health Occupations - Perinatal Mental Health Conditions. This bill would expand perinatal mental health screenings and require patient and provider training related to perinatal mental health. In short, this bill will save lives.

In my clinical practice, I see the "invisible" crisis. Perinatal Mental Health Conditions (PMH) are the most common complication of childbirth, yet they remain the most underdiagnosed.

Despite my professional training, I was not immune. After the birth of my child, I experienced postpartum anxiety and depression that left me feeling like a stranger in my own life. I had an idea of what was happening, yet the stigma and the lack of proactive outreach from my own medical team made it incredibly difficult to reach for a lifeline. Had I not had the resources and "insider knowledge" of the system, I might have become another tragic statistic. No mother should have to be a mental health expert just to survive her first year of parenthood.

Without the mandatory screenings and provider training outlined in SB 891, we are essentially asking struggling parents to save themselves. When providers aren't trained to ask the right questions, symptoms are often dismissed as "just new parent exhaustion." This negligence doesn't just delay healing; it destroys families.

SB 891 is not just a policy update; it is a lifeline. It acknowledges that mental health is physical health, and that a mother's well-being is the foundation of a healthy family and a healthy state. I respectfully ask for a favorable report on SB 891.

Sincerely,

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